



General Assembly

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55th plenary meeting

Thursday, 21 November 2002, 10 a.m.
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Official Records

President: Mr. Kavan (Czech Republic)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Hidayat (Indonesia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 22 (continued)

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations

- (a) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/122)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.18)

- (b) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/87)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.11)

- (c) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/254)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.26)

- (d) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/225)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.23)

- (e) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/266 and A/57/266/Add.1)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.25)

- (f) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/119)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.22)

- (g) Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/358)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.29)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

02-70344 (E)



(h) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/375)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.38)

(i) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Latin American Economic System

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/128)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.24)

(j) Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/386)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.32)

(k) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (A/57/576)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.31)

(l) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/217)

(m) Cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/351, A/57/351/Corr.1)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.39)

(n) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of American States

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/267)

(o) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/405)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.28)

(p) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/475)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.21)

(q) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission (A/57/255)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.40)

(r) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/94, A/57/94/Add.1)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.30)

(s) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of South-East Asian Nations

Draft resolution (A/57/L.16)

Mr. Cappagli (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Bearing in mind the suggested time limit on statements, and notwithstanding the great importance of cooperation between the United Nations and each of the 19 entities we are considering under this agenda item, I shall on this occasion confine my comments to cooperation with the Organization of American States (OAS), with the Latin American Economic System (SELA), with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

I would like to express my delegation's satisfaction with the continued cooperation that exists between this Organization and the Organization of American States. The information provided by the Secretary-General in his report (document A/57/267) indicates that in Haiti the United Nations has continued to provide support for the OAS Special Mission for Strengthening Democracy in Haiti, and to participate in meetings of the Group of Friends. Similarly, in Guatemala, cooperation has continued between the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA) and various representatives of the OAS.

The exchange of information between the two organizations concerning the general trend on the continent has also been substantial and has covered the recent crises in various countries of the region, including my own. We understand that existing dialogue and cooperation need to be strengthened and broadened. The OAS plays a vital role in the hemisphere in defending democracy and protecting human rights. Its knowledge of regional problems puts it in the best position to enable the United Nations to benefit by its experience and capacity on issues of common interest.

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, which has a very good reputation in the region, needs to achieve better coordination with the universal human rights treaty bodies. It is also desirable for that cooperation to be extended to the special rapporteurs of the United Nations Commission of Human Rights. Such coordination and harmonization of their respective activities, which is beginning to happen through the channel of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, will always redound to the benefit of strengthening the protection of human rights in the region.

Another propitious area for cooperation, in our view, is the economic and social sphere. The report notes the existence of various levels of exchange between the OAS and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the OAS and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). Such cooperation could be expanded to other areas in order to unify the efforts of the various organizations to promote the attainment of the Millennium Goals on the continent, in particular in the areas of development and poverty eradication.

My country also values the diversification of the cooperation between the Latin American Economic System and the United Nations. We hope that these activities, and particularly those involving the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNCTAD, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) will be deepened and strengthened, which would also benefit the region's development.

The Argentine delegation welcomes the adoption by this General Assembly of resolution 57/32, which invites the Inter-Parliamentary Union to participate in the work of the General Assembly as an observer. We take the view that this historic event is a rightful recognition of the work done by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which aims at ensuring that parliamentarians the world over commit themselves to the activities of the international community in areas such as peace and security, human rights, economic and social development, democracy and gender issues.

We wish to express our profound satisfaction at the election of Senator Sergio Pérez Verdugo of Chile as President of the Inter-Parliamentary Council. Argentina takes genuine pride in seeing Senator Pérez conducting the work of the Union, and we wish him every success.

In the course of the past year, we have noted the growing cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Parliamentarians from all around the world have participated in parallel events during important United Nations meetings. Also, through the IPU, parliamentarians have shown greater interest in attending the general debate of the General Assembly and the deliberations of the Commission on Human Rights in Geneva. Here, the annual meetings between parliamentarians attending the general debate and senior United Nations officials have the dual purpose of heightening the awareness of parliamentarians on the questions under debate in the United Nations and establishing open and constructive dialogue with the Organization.

We also deem noteworthy the discussions that take place during IPU conferences on issues relating to peace and security, as well as to economic and social development. These debates have engendered a greater commitment by parliamentarians to forge legislation in keeping with the commitments undertaken by

Governments in the international arena. In order to support these efforts, a collection of handbooks for parliamentarians is being published jointly by the IPU and several United Nations agencies. We hope that the United Nations Secretariat will ensure more efficient cooperation in the preparation and publishing of these very useful tools for legislative action. At this point, I would be remiss if I did not pay tribute to the Secretary-General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Mr. Anders B. Johnsson, for his tireless efforts to relaunch cooperation between the IPU and the United Nations. As a sponsor of draft resolution A/57/L.38, the Argentine Republic hopes that the General Assembly will adopt it by consensus.

Argentina wishes, above all, to reaffirm its firm commitment to disarmament and international security, which form an essential basis for building a peaceful and constructive relationship among nations and for promoting their development.

In this context, the role of the Chemical Weapons Convention, which it is the duty of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to implement, is of particular importance. However, it is a difficult task involving the destruction of immense arsenals, which will require substantial financial contributions. Moreover, the political will of the international community is required to achieve the vital objective of making the Convention universal.

The OPCW also has to ensure the fulfilment of another of the Convention's goals, namely, non-proliferation. In many instances, the task is to prevent widely available chemical substances that might be needed for the agricultural and industrial development of our countries from being manufactured and used for non-peaceful purposes. This task is especially important at a time when the international community is threatened by the phenomenon of terrorism, which has demonstrated its willingness to use any weapon of mass destruction to spread hatred and destruction.

Likewise, the Convention's preamble makes clear that advances in the field of chemistry should be used exclusively for the benefit of humankind. We therefore emphasize the importance of the organization's task and underline once more the importance of international cooperation in order to make available for developing countries the human and technological resources for activities in the field of chemistry whose purposes are not prohibited by the Convention.

One of the numerous important tasks imposed by the Chemical Weapons Convention is the need for the implementation of the Convention at the national level through the adoption of domestic legislation facilitating the monitoring and prosecution of violations of the Convention.

During the current year, the organization has suffered a crisis affecting its activities and threatening its future. Fortunately, with the cooperation of all States Parties to the Convention, we have managed to overcome that difficult situation and to restore the climate of harmony and cooperation that must reign among all members of the organization, as well as between members and the Technical Secretariat, in order to achieve the goals of the organization.

We are pleased that the States Parties to the Convention have entrusted a distinguished Argentine diplomat, Ambassador Rogelio Pfrter, with leading the Technical Secretariat in the new stage that we are beginning. We are confident that the new Director-General, who has demonstrated his personal and professional talents throughout his long career in the area of peace and security, will bring a renewed dynamism to the organization and will work to ensure that the Technical Secretariat carries out its activities in ongoing consultation and understanding with all member States. We wish the Director-General and all the personnel of the Technical Secretariat every success in their important task.

Let me conclude by expressing our hope that progress will continue in all areas of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction until the time when we can be certain that the threat to the maintenance of international peace and security caused by those terrible weapons of mass destruction has forever been overcome.

Mr. Sun Joun-yung (Republic of Korea): My delegation is pleased to take the floor on agenda item 22 in the light of the increased necessity of intensifying cooperation and interaction between the United Nations and regional and other organizations in order to address the challenges facing the international community today.

We will limit our comments to a few areas of cooperation that are of interest to us. The Republic of Korea accords special attention to cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union

(IPU). We believe that enhancing such a close, cooperative relationship will have a salutary impact on the future of the Organization. That is because the members of the IPU bring with them vast experience and expertise in promoting the globalization of democracy, human rights and economic and social development.

We are therefore pleased to note, as outlined in the Secretary-General's report (A/57/375), that this has been a productive year for cooperation between the IPU and the United Nations. Areas of fruitful cooperation have included the IPU's participation in the special session of the General Assembly on Children, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the follow-up to the World Food Summit.

While acknowledging the endeavours of the IPU in carrying out the work of the United Nations at the national level, through its legislative activities, there are still ample opportunities for the IPU and the United Nations to cultivate substantive relations by going beyond mere declarations. Hence, my delegation is pleased once again to be a sponsor the draft resolution on this item.

As a full dialogue partner of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Republic of Korea welcomes the inclusion of the sub-item on the General Assembly's agenda entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of South-East Asian Nations". In our view, enhanced cooperation between the two bodies will contribute to promoting peace and stability and socio-economic development in the region. We hope that the formalization of the relationship between the two bodies, which already has a long history of development partnership, will be expanded in the years to come.

With respect to cooperation between the United Nations and Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO), the two bodies have enjoyed a long, constructive relationship in promoting and developing international law. We take note with satisfaction of the contributions of AALCO, especially in serving as a major forum of cooperation on legal issues and as an essential organization for Asian and African countries in the development of international law. The Republic of Korea is thus honoured to host the forty-second session of AALCO in June 2003 and

remains confident that this meeting will become a cornerstone in ensuring the vital role of this body in the coming years.

Let me now address the issue of cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). My delegation has always attached particular importance to the activities of the OPCW, and that body has become even more relevant considering the current climate of threats to international security, including potential acts of chemical terrorism.

Since the adoption of the agreement on relations between the United Nations and the OPCW in May 2001, progress has been accomplished in the area of mutually beneficial cooperation between the two bodies.

We are pleased to note that the OPCW has expressed its readiness to cooperate with the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee by providing information and assistance in line with Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). As the threats of weapons of mass destruction grow, the OPCW deserves the unreserved support of its member States and the international community at large, to strengthen its verification regime.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to say a few words on the cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

During the past year, the shared interests and concerns of the United Nations and the OSCE have led to expanded cooperation in a number of important areas, including counter-terrorism, peacekeeping and peace-building initiatives, early warning and preventive diplomacy, refugees and promoting the rights of children. Having already acquired a solid record in those and other areas, the OSCE is uniquely placed to collaborate in close partnership with the United Nations.

As a partner for cooperation with the OSCE, the Republic of Korea is supportive of its activities and welcomes the specific efforts directed to improve consultation and cooperation between the respective headquarters of the two organizations.

Mr. Iwiński (Poland): I would like to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General for presenting his comprehensive report on cooperation between the

United Nations and the Council of Europe. The report highlights the progress made during the past year in the area of cooperation between two meaningful international organizations. This cooperation, although sometimes underestimated, constitutes an invaluable contribution to the promotion of peace, democracy and human rights on the European continent.

The Council of Europe is the oldest European integration organization. It emerged 53 years ago from the pre-war ideas and concepts of a unified Europe. It was also the first organization made up of democratic States which included during the 1990s almost all Central and Eastern European countries — among them Poland — giving them a sense of return to their own principles and values, as well as providing them with the means to implement and consolidate their political, legal and administrative reforms. After almost half a century, the Former Council of Western Europe has taken steps over the past decade towards changing its shape, its name and its mission. Thus, the Council of Europe plays a key role in ensuring respect for, and compliance with, human rights, on behalf of hundreds of millions of European citizens.

In an increasingly globalized world, cooperation between various international organizations, complementing cooperation among independent States, is urgent. In order to promote and implement the principles and values shared by their members, as well as to tackle the most important global issues — discussed recently at United Nations conferences held at such venues as Monterrey and Johannesburg — like-minded international institutions need to cooperate further within, and sometimes even beyond, their respective mandates. The dialogue and cooperation between the United Nations system and the Council of Europe can serve as an example of such an endeavour.

The Council of Europe shares with the United Nations long and outstanding experience in promoting peace, democracy, the rule of law and human rights, contributing to conflict prevention, confidence-building and long-term post-conflict peace-building in many countries. Both organizations are particularly involved in the Balkans, where United Nations Missions in Kosovo and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, together with the Council of Europe, collaborate to lend invaluable support in preparing legislation, providing judicial and legal training and developing the institutions of civil society and local governments.

The engagement of the United Nations and the Council of Europe has already contributed to the consolidation of stable local institutions, the introduction of democratic legislation and a reinforcement of the private sector, in order to prevent another terrible war from engulfing that part of Europe. Further development of close cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe is required in peace-building and the establishment of political stability in South-Eastern Europe. Such cooperation should include the training of human rights observers, human rights educational programmes and the promotion of dialogue among civilizations. Of course dialogue among civilizations refers to other continents, as well as Europe.

The wide range of activities of the Council of Europe gives it an opportunity to work in the field with various United Nations specialized organizations and programmes, such as the Offices of the United Nations High Commissioners for Human Rights and for Refugees, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Environmental Program and the International Labour Organization, to name a few. While working together they can learn from one another and undertake new challenges, which concern almost all aspects of political and social life, including such important issues as the prevention of terrorism, transnational organized crime, corruption, money-laundering, trafficking in human beings, the return of refugees and internally displaced persons to their countries of origin and racial discrimination.

The tragic events of 11 September taught us that in order to prevent threats to peace, security and prosperity, all global issues have to be resolved in a comprehensive and sustainable manner by joint action. The United Nations and the Council of Europe can play a role in these endeavours. As Chair of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, I must stress the need for joint action in this context to resolve the worsening problem of refugees and illegal migrants.

Poland highly appreciates the role of the Council of Europe in promoting and implementing values and principles such as democracy and the rule of law. We are also in favour of further enhancing the close cooperation and coordination of work between the

Council for Europe and the United Nations family, encouraging further exchanges of views, experiences and expertise on many other subjects of common interest. Despite concentrating our current efforts on the final phase of accession negotiations with the European Union, we attach special importance to the activities of the Council of Europe, especially those which contribute to promoting peace, stability and democracy across the continent. We are of the opinion that the Council of Europe has contributed over all the decades of its existence to the practical implementation of the values embodied in the Charter of the United Nations in many parts of Europe. The Council of Europe is perhaps the only international institution which conceived and implemented a system of human rights protection, including the European Court of Human Rights, which is available to every person originating from a State party to the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. This is just one example of how the values shared by the United Nations and the Council of Europe can be mutually defended and promoted.

Let me say in conclusion that I am convinced that the forthcoming meetings of the Council of Europe will provide an opportunity to further discuss the issue of cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe. We should particularly focus on the new challenges of the 21st century. To face them in an effective way, we undoubtedly need new thoughts, projects and activities, together with new mechanisms for cooperation.

I would like to confirm my country's readiness, expressed a few months ago during the last visit by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe to Warsaw, to organize the third Council of Europe Summit in Poland. The final modalities of this event would be discussed in May 2003 during the next session of the Committee of Ministers of the Council.

Finally, I would like to give my full support to the suggestion by the United Nations Secretary-General that he report more comprehensively on the cooperation between the two organizations on an every-other-year basis.

Mr. Malofeev (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The twenty-first century, the state of world affairs and the needs of United Nations Member States have challenged the Organization with more complex and massive tasks. The most important components of

international development, including overcoming economic backwardness, poverty eradication, elimination of crime, measures to maintain peace and security, the protection of the environment and combating terrorism are constantly at the centre of attention at the United Nations.

The United Nations is increasing its influence in these and other areas through strengthening the Organization's potential by means of comprehensive reform. The Republic of Belarus is interested in enhancing and increasing the authority and influence of the United Nations, not only because our country is one of the founding Member States of the United Nations. In the United Nations, we see support for all countries, regardless of their size, economic and political power and geographical area. Within the United Nations, all countries can hold an equal dialogue and are not dependent on the passing moods of the major world Powers.

The United Nations is involved in the solution of the most current and acute international problems, as are international parliamentarians. National parliaments are in a good position to do a great deal of wise and productive work, to improve the lives of people throughout the world. It is no accident that the agenda of the current session of the General Assembly includes the subject of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. The United Nations is, therefore, one of the most important places for this discussion concerning the interrelationship between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).

In expressing the position of the Belarus Parliament, I would like to say that the IPU is an authoritative and influential body bringing together 144 parliaments of the world. The leadership of the IPU is interested in developing fruitful relations with the United Nations and is doing everything possible to strengthen these contacts. Mr. Anders Johnsson, the Secretary General of the IPU, is making every effort to develop such cooperation.

Over the past few years, the IPU has adopted and implemented several resolutions, as well as other measures, to support the United Nations, a topic that arises frequently at major United Nations conferences and meetings of the Security Council. The Belarus delegation greatly appreciates the activities of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi

Annan, who greatly supports developing relations with the IPU.

The Millennium General Assembly, held at the United Nations in September 2000 with the participation of heads of State or Government, was an important milestone. The IPU conference of presidents of national parliaments was also important. The Declaration adopted at the Millennium Assembly stressed the need to establish closer relations between the United Nations and the IPU, and I well recall that time, since I was a participant in those forums and spoke from this very rostrum.

Since the Millennium Summit, a great deal has been accomplished. Today we can justifiably say that cooperation between two powerful organizations is progressing. This is clearly seen in the report of the Secretary-General submitted to the 57th session of the General Assembly, which provides a full picture of the interaction of the two organizations. Of great significance to the IPU are the annual meetings of parliamentarians at United Nations Headquarters in New York, as well as their participation in the meetings of the United Nations General Assembly as members of national delegations.

The day before yesterday we held our regular annual meeting. Such meetings give parliamentarians greater opportunities to communicate problems of common interest. IPU is pleased that it has been proposed for observer status in the meetings and work of the General Assembly. We also support the proposed resolution for the General Assembly on cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU.

Today we cannot but touch upon the topic of terrorism. The brutality and the scale of the inhuman tragedy on 11 September 2001 shook the whole planet. The world has never before witnessed such a monstrous event. The taking, of nearly 1,000 hostages from two dozen countries in Moscow last month by Chechnyan fighters, again confirmed that international terrorism not only possesses a powerful financial basis, but is also very well equipped technically, well organized and also, unfortunately, finds support and financing for its inhuman actions in several States.

These two events are, unfortunately, links in the same chain. They have changed the world and have shown that no country is immune to possible attacks and terrorist acts. Today the world is one in its understanding of the need to combat the evil of

international terrorism. In these circumstances, the role of the United Nations and the IPU significantly increases in combining the efforts of States to combat terrorism and we feel it is the United Nations which should be the centre for developing strategies and tactics for action by the international community to counter this evil.

In turn, the IPU can and must assume the function of coordinator of the activities of national parliaments to quickly bring all countries of the world to adhere to United Nations anti-terrorism conventions. We need to accelerate the finalization and adoption of a comprehensive convention on combating terrorism. My country considers itself an inseparable part of the international anti-terrorism coalition and, within international law, is making its contribution to this common cause.

This year we adopted a national law on combating terrorism and have included several other measures. However, we must all understand that the breeding ground for terrorism is backwardness, underdevelopment and a lack of basic living conditions for normal life for many people. These problems create social and political instability in many regions of the world.

I shall touch upon one other global problem which is of great concern. We need to recognize that the world environmental situation is seriously deteriorating. The main cause of this is a not always judicious, sometimes even dangerous production activities of man which can cause serious manmade disasters. Just such a disaster — the Chernobyl nuclear power station accident — had a profound impact upon the United Nations.

I would like to once again recall the tragic consequences of this accident. More than 70 per cent of the radioactive fallout fell on our territory. One in five inhabitants of Belarus, including more than half a million children, have been affected. Annually the State spends 15 per cent of its budget on eliminating the consequences of the accident. The Republic of Belarus is sincerely grateful to the many States of the world for their assistance which has been given in overcoming the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster. International assistance, however, is not commensurate with the scale of the disaster at Chernobyl and the resultant losses being borne by Belarus. We welcome, therefore, the new strategy of

the Organization endorsed by the General Assembly on the socio-economic rehabilitation of the regions affected as a result of the Chernobyl accident.

I hope that through joint efforts at the State and parliamentary levels we will be able to find an effective solution to the pressing problems facing all of humankind.

Mr. Bergqvist (Sweden): Speaking on behalf of the Government of Sweden, let me first of all stress that I associate myself entirely with the message delivered by the presidency of the European Union.

As a member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, I will naturally focus on the relations between the Council of Europe and the United Nations.

The highest common denominator between the United Nations and the Council of Europe is the central role that human rights play in their activities. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights are both utterly central instruments for achieving humanism in the world.

The United Nations and the Council of Europe have always complemented each other. Following the end of the cold war, this complementarity has grown even more important. Today, one of the main undertakings of the Council of Europe is active support for the rule of law and the development of sound practices in new and re-established democracies. This also has global implications and is of great importance from a United Nations perspective.

The Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, has often talked about the need to take intergovernmental policy decisions back to the citizens, who are the ones who will abide by these decisions and benefit from them. The Secretary-General has underlined the need for a two-way political discussion to make citizens understand and accept decisions which, to them, might seem to have been made far away and as a result of complicated international processes.

Here, the Council of Europe and other regional organizations can be of great use.

When the Council of Europe was created in 1949, it was a unique international organization insofar as it included a body with direct democratic links to the people: the Parliamentary Assembly. That institution

was made up of elected members of national parliaments, that is, politicians who had a mandate from their voters and were responsible to them. True, the Inter-Parliamentary Union had had a similar set-up in the nineteenth century, but the Council of Europe combined this with the Committee of Ministers, which not only represents the member Governments, but is obliged to react, in the name of those Governments, to political impulses from the Parliamentary Assembly.

For many years, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has also served as a democratic anchor for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Once a year, parliamentary delegations from Korea, Japan, Canada and Mexico join the session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe to discuss the development of the world economy and other OECD matters.

In the 1990s, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) formed its own Parliamentary Assembly. The OSCE complements the Council of Europe in an interesting way: both organizations deal with, *inter alia*, human rights and social, cultural and economic issues. The difference is that the OSCE does it from a broad perspective of security and the Council of Europe from a perspective of individual rights.

Consequently, within the framework of the cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe, there are lots of opportunities to utilize the direct links between the members of the Parliamentary Assembly and their constituents for a direct political discussion on urgent international issues. Furthermore, with the creation of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities within the Council of Europe, an even more basic channel to the populations of Europe has been established.

This opens up interesting perspectives for political dialogue, especially since the core activities are so much in parallel. I am thinking of the meticulous everyday work that is done, which is not always spectacular, but has immense long-term importance in terms of conflict prevention. For instance, there is inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue, and history schoolbooks are scrutinized to identify and change traditional but negative or xenophobic descriptions of the neighbouring world.

Let us make optimal use of our common resources to develop conflict-prevention strategies and

build up a more systematic conflict-prevention machinery. At the recent European Union regional meeting on conflict prevention, held in Sweden in August, both the Council of Europe and the United Nations were able to share valuable experiences of practical cooperation in this field.

There is an interesting offspring of the Council of Europe called the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity, or simply the North-South Centre. As can be deduced from its name, the Centre's goal is to serve as a bridge to other cultures. In addition, it is currently working hard to follow up the Johannesburg meeting in the field of education for sustainable development, where it has made great efforts in supporting the work of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

The Council of Europe is proud of the fact that it has managed to create an area free of capital punishment under all circumstances. This is manifested in the 13th Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights, which a majority of member States have now also signed.

Following the tragic events of 11 September last year, it was only natural for the Council of Europe to make every possible contribution to the fight against terrorism. That political preparedness resulted, among other things, in a set of guidelines for the important work of combating terrorism while preserving democracy and human rights.

It is of crucial importance that States do not deviate from their democratic standards of openness, responsibility and legal predictability just because they are dealing with evil terrorists. If we are not steadfast in that respect we may soon find ourselves on a very slippery slope towards lower standards in the field of democracy and human rights. In that context, it is also to be hoped that the International Criminal Court will eventually be universally recognized and that its Statute will not be diluted or set aside by bilateral agreements.

We must all do our best to ensure that the high standards of the United Nations — which are also the standards of the Council of Europe — will prevail in the future. Together and in increasingly close partnership, we must build further on that platform.

Mr. Musambachime (Zambia): My delegation would like to express its appreciation to the Secretary-

General for his report contained in documents A/57/94 and A/57/94/Add.1, in which he provides an update to his previous reports contained in documents A/56/134 and A/56/134/Add.1, on programmes and activities undertaken by Member States and bodies of the United Nations in cooperation with the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

My delegation also wishes to associate itself with the statements made by the representative of Angola on behalf of SADC and by the representative of the Republic of South Africa on behalf of the African Union, in which they urged support for the draft resolutions they introduced, draft resolutions A/57/L.30 — on cooperation with SADC — and A/57/39 — on cooperation with the African Union — respectively.

My Government recognizes the importance of regional integration as a fundamental tool to foster social and economic development. Given the small size of our individual economies, which are unable to achieve economies of scale in the production and marketing of products, there is a need to work together as a region in order to achieve significant levels of economic growth and to compete in a world that is becoming increasingly dominated by large trading blocs. Trade liberalization and regional integration will therefore promote greater growth through improved resource allocation, greater competition, technology transfers and improved access to foreign capital.

It is in that regard that my delegation firmly supports the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which provides a comprehensive and integrated development plan that addresses key social, economic and political issues on the continent. The international community should support the commitment of our leaders in Africa to the people by assisting Africa to embark on a path of sustainable growth. That can be achieved through the continent's accelerated integration into the global economy.

We welcome the support the NEPAD initiative has received at major conferences, in particular at the Group of Eight Summit held in Kananaskis, Canada. We also applaud the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly that was held on 16 September 2002 and devoted to a discussion of the NEPAD issue. We welcome resolution 57/2, which was adopted by the General Assembly at that meeting, and hope that it will be fully implemented. That support is a clear

manifestation of the commitment of the international community to address the problems of the region, and those of the continent as a whole.

With regard to the report of the Secretary-General, we note with appreciation the role of the United Nations and the international community in support of efforts by SADC to promote sustainable development and regional integration in a broad spectrum of economic and social areas. We also note with great satisfaction the efforts of the United Nations and Member States to initiate and strengthen cooperation with SADC and its member States in the areas of conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peace-building. Those efforts have heightened the prospects for peace in Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

However, I wish to highlight two areas of grave concern to our region, namely, the humanitarian crisis affecting the SADC region and the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

For the third consecutive year, Southern Africa has been affected by natural disasters. This year, drought has affected Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe, causing severe food shortages. According to available information, 14.5 million people are affected. That combination of calamities comes at a time when the extent of the humanitarian crisis in the region is becoming clear. It is estimated that there will be a total regional shortfall of 4 million tons of food over the next year, of which 1.2 million tons will be met by emergency food aid.

With respect to my country, Zambia, this is the second year that we are experiencing severe drought. It is estimated that 2.3 million people need emergency food assistance. That unfortunate situation has further been exacerbated by the high prevalence of AIDS, which affects the most productive age group — that in the range of 15 to 49 years of age.

Furthermore, poor communities have become more vulnerable to natural disasters and erratic weather. In addition, other factors faced by the region — such as economic decline, dwindling commodity prices and limited access to Western markets — are constraining development.

Against that background, my delegation wishes to appeal to the international community for food aid to solve the immediate food shortages and to prevent a

severe catastrophe. We further appeal to the donor community to take an integrated approach to the problem, as this is not just a question of famine but also one that involves a wider public health issue as regards water and sanitation. In the long run it would also be advisable for the donor community to engage and strengthen regional mechanisms within SADC to address this crisis.

Finally, we wish to express our support for the views of other delegations that have called on the Secretary-General to continue to intensify contacts aimed at promoting and harmonizing cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community. The challenges facing our Community are grave, but they are not insurmountable. We believe that the United Nations is best placed to mobilize the necessary resources from the international community that will effectively address the problems we are confronting in the region. My delegation appeals for support for the draft resolutions before us.

Mr. Aliyev (Azerbaijan): At the outset, I would like to align myself with previous speakers in expressing my delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General for the preparation of the reports on the agenda item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations". Given the time factor, I would like to focus on sub-items 22 (b), (d), (l), (n) and (o).

The Republic of Azerbaijan attaches great importance to cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. These organizations are an integral part of a globalizing world that needs consolidated and coordinated efforts at the regional level aimed at combating such threats and challenges as military conflicts, terrorism, drug trafficking, organized crime, arms smuggling, illegal migration, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, natural disasters, poverty and social and economic degradation.

During the last decade the significance of the Council of Europe has grown. This organization plays an outstanding role in instituting European integration and leading the process towards the formation of a common legal framework through the unification of national legislation on the basis of European conventional norms, strengthening democratic institutions and developing cultural identity in Europe.

The enlargement of the Council of Europe created an opportunity for the new Eastern European democracies to participate closely in European life and to quickly develop the conditions needed to meet the socio-political and juridical requirements for admission to the European Union. We underline the valuable contribution of the Council to democratic stability in Europe and welcome the fact that the activities of that organization are increasingly being referred to by others beyond the region of its responsibility. The Council's experience deserves close attention by the United Nations.

In today's world the importance of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) as a structure that brings together States on the basis of common cultural, historical and religious traditions and values is growing. In the context of new challenges, that organization plays a significant role as an influential participant in the dialogue aimed at strengthening confidence between civilizations. Having gained since its very inception a solid international reputation and influence, particularly in the vast area from North Africa to South-Eastern Asia, where numerous "hot spots" exist, the OIC has demonstrated its true interest in ensuring international peace and security and has consolidated the efforts of Islamic States to combat current challenges and risks.

With a profound perception from within of the problems of the Orient and their complex character, the OIC would expect that the international community would be more attentive to its opinion with regard to the achievement of stability and accord in regions with predominant Muslim populations. Constructive dialogue and cooperation with the OIC could contribute to the solution of many complex issues, including the settlement of armed conflicts and suppression of sources of international terrorism.

It is noteworthy that a large number of OIC countries have vast natural resources and great potential for development. Effective utilization of these resources would benefit those countries and would secure interests throughout the world, as a result of a comprehensively balanced relationship with the Orient.

The Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC) has developed from a cooperation initiative in the Black Sea region into a European organization, with a broad range of sub-

entities. This process has gained pace during the last three years.

Cooperation among States with different values, levels of economic development, natural resources and productive forces sets the ground for a deepening of mutual dialogue and for exploration of common ways to develop economic cooperation in the region. Priority directions of the organization have already been determined and include mainly the energy and transport sectors. Azerbaijan contributes actively to the BSEC, and in a wider context, to Europe in the development of these important sectors.

Being actively engaged in the expansion of its relations with the outside world, Azerbaijan places great significance on the further development of mutual advantageous cooperation with members of the Organization of American States (OAS). In 2001, Azerbaijan was granted the status of a permanent observer at that organization. Our country will do its utmost to contribute positively to cooperation between the United Nations and the OAS.

Continuing our discussion of the significance of regional organizations in global development, we see the OSCE as the only European structure that brings together all countries of the region. The historical merit of that organization, which took upon itself the responsibility for building a pan-European home on the basis of common principles of security and cooperation, is in its important role in sustaining peace in the era of the bloc confrontation, in the democratic transformation of Eastern European societies at the end of last century, as well as in establishing prerequisites for the integration process throughout the European continent. Owing to the activities of OSCE, there has been rapprochement among European States, and standards of conduct and the main spheres of cooperation were established.

Meanwhile, during the last decade, the effectiveness of the OSCE to countering dangerous new challenges was seriously tested. We believe that the OSCE has to enhance its contribution to the settlement of conflicts primarily in the area of its responsibility.

In this context, allow me to touch upon the peaceful settlement of Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict within the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group. Mediation by the Minsk Group should be impartial, just and aimed at the unconditional implementation of

decisions of the OSCE and the United Nations Security Council with regard to the withdrawal of Armenian occupying forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and the complete elimination of the consequences of the armed conflict, with a settlement based on strict compliance with the principles set forth in the Helsinki Final Act of 1975.

Departure from these principles and decisions or consideration of proposals by mediators based on the acceptance of *fait accompli* put the rule of law and the effectiveness of international mediation under serious doubt, undermine confidence in the OSCE Minsk Group and negatively impact the prestige of the OSCE, which plays a lead role in the resolution of the conflict in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, as rightly mentioned in the Secretary General's report entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the OSCE", document A/57/217. We maintain, however, that given the protracted lack of progress in the negotiations and the "conciliation" efforts by the mediators with regard to the results of the Armenian aggression, there is a need for decisive intervention by the Security Council, which has not exhausted all its opportunities for exerting influence to achieve a breakthrough in the negotiations.

For our part, my country has very recently put forward a package of proposals on the partial elimination of the consequences of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict and the establishment of cooperation. Backed by the international organizations concerned, the package implies the withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from four occupied districts of Azerbaijan and the restoration of the main railroad line passing through those territories and linking Azerbaijan, Armenia and other countries of the region. However, our proposals, the realization of which could have been an important confidence-building step towards a peaceful resolution of the conflict and regional cooperation, were rejected by Armenia.

Let me conclude by emphasizing that enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations will lead to the increased practical and operational effectiveness and efficiency of the organizations involved. Our delegation is also convinced that the United Nations can only benefit from close cooperation with those organizations.

Mr. Salman (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I should like to express our appreciation for the

fact that cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations has become a separate item on our agenda, which will undoubtedly give added impetus to the working methods of the General Assembly and improve its efficiency. In addition, my delegation commends the Secretary-General for his report contained in document A/57/375, which details the levels of cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and their activities in the fields of peace, security, economic and social development, international law, human rights and democracy. We believe that the IPU has an immense wealth of knowledge and experience from which the Organization can greatly benefit.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union represents the voices of the people. Accordingly, it must be a significant component of the work of the United Nations and should play an important role in the strengthening of multilateral diplomacy. That will be possible only if our legislative bodies have a greater part in decision-making processes to enhance international cooperation within the framework of the United Nations. Parliaments are an expression of the voices of the people, and thus, their participation guarantees the democratic nature of such decision-making processes.

An important aspect to note in that regard is the IPU's ability to make a positive contribution to the current debate on reform of the United Nations, especially that of the Security Council and of the General Assembly. Council resolutions should be just and democratic and should allow those affected by such resolutions to take them before the International Court of Justice so that the Court can decide whether or not they conform to the Charter of the United Nations. That would prevent one or more countries from pressuring the Security Council to adopt resolutions of ill political intent without giving those affected the right to any legal recourse to ascertain the legality of such resolutions, just as citizens have the right to question the constitutionality of laws adopted by legislative bodies and high tribunals.

Relations and cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU conform to the provisions of the Charter, which encourages and determines partnerships among regional organizations, especially with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security. As my delegation has noted, the IPU should actively participate in any important agenda items that have

international implications. Such a partnership is essential under the current circumstances and challenges now faced by the international community, because it can improve the transparency of the Organization's work and its accountability to international public opinion.

In order to halt the anarchy that is spreading through international relations as a result of the increasing tendency to infringe upon the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and to interfere in their internal affairs — contrary to the principles of the Charter — and to stop the United Nations from losing the respect of the world's peoples and from being consumed by selfish interests, we call on the IPU to join other organizations of goodwill in their efforts to save the Organization and to confront the policies of hegemony, tyranny and destabilization of States and the inflaming of ethnic divisions.

What is happening in Iraq as a result of the embargo that the United States insists on maintaining without any moral or legal support is clearly a case of tyranny and injustice. Indeed, it constitutes genocide that not even United Nations personnel could tolerate. Genocide is a crime under the Charter and international law, yet it is occurring there. Every day, the children, women and elderly people of Iraq are dying. What is happening in the Security Council with regard to the Iraqi question is yet another example of flagrant violation of the Charter and of international law.

The people of Iraq, the Arab people, the Muslims and all the free peoples of the world call for democracy, respect for justice, the application of international legitimacy and respect for the Charter and for international law in word and in deed. To that end, the IPU can make a positive contribution. It is our hope that the debate on this item will strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU. Will our meeting succeed in bringing that about? We sincerely hope that it will.

Mr. Davis (United Kingdom): Thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the floor to address this important agenda item. I should like to begin by thanking the distinguished representative of Denmark, who spoke earlier in the debate on behalf of the member States of the European Union, and to take this opportunity to put on record that the delegation of the United Kingdom fully endorses their statement.

As we did last year, we have gladly supported the Secretary-General's recommendation that the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) be granted observer status here at the United Nations. And the British Group of the IPU has also asked me to pass on its full support. I welcome this recognition of the valuable role that the IPU plays worldwide in fostering peace and security through dialogue, in promoting democracy and respect for human rights, and in contributing to the development of representative and effective legislative institutions.

The IPU already does a great deal of excellent work in support of the objectives of the United Nations. In recent months, it has also provided parliamentary forums on the occasions of the fifty-eighth session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, the General Assembly special session on children, the World Food Summit: five years later and the World Summit on Sustainable Development. And, of course, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe is also much involved in the follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

That is one reason why, as a member of the United Kingdom delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly and leader of the Socialist Group — the largest political group in the Assembly — I also welcome and support the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe, with its total membership of 44 countries, following the accession of Bosnia and Herzegovina during the past year, and our close relationship with Canada, Mexico and several other members of the United Nations from other continents.

The Council of Europe and the United Nations emerged at a similar point in history. Both shared a common goal: to put an end to the scourge of war. The statesmen who struggled to make the Council of Europe a reality took heart from the foundation of the United Nations. More than 50 years have passed, and today the Council of Europe continues to regard the United Nations as a source of inspiration and practical expertise in achieving our common goals. The two organizations are mutually reinforcing. The Council of Europe looks to the United Nations to take a lead on global conflict prevention and human rights issues. In return, it serves to underpin and advance the universal goals and values of the United Nations throughout the European continent.

Tragically, despite the efforts of the United Nations, the Council of Europe and others, war and conflict remain a global scourge that destroys the lives and hopes of millions. Europe has not been immune. The end of the cold war brought most of Central and Eastern Europe into the Council of Europe, but this development was preceded by violent conflicts that saw human rights abuses on a massive scale in the South Caucasus and South-East Europe. No one would claim that the United Nations has got everything right in South-East Europe. But it has played a vital role in stabilizing the region and in bringing to justice those responsible for serious war crimes and some of the worst abuses of human rights.

The Council of Europe has worked alongside the United Nations to assist its post-conflict peace-building efforts. At the request of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe once again mounted an election observation mission in Kosovo for this year's local government elections. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Council of Europe is supporting the work of the Office of the High Representative by extensive training of the judiciary. And the Council of Europe is involved in the promotion of human rights and democratic institutions, economic development and the fight against corruption across the whole of South-East Europe, especially through our contribution to the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.

But cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe goes far beyond the borders of South-East Europe. It is about the mutual reinforcement of a common set of values and goals. It is about respect for human rights; the prevention of torture; the fight against discrimination, racism and xenophobia; and the campaign for equal treatment and equal opportunities for men and women. It is about securing a better future, based on universally held rights and values. The points of interaction are too numerous to catalogue in full, so I shall mention just a few.

As the report of the United Nations Secretary-General shows, the last year has been notable for increased cooperation between the Council of Europe, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Of course, the Council of Europe's greatest contribution to human rights and peace is its legal

instruments. And when we are engaged in the promotion of the European Convention on Human Rights, we are, at the same time, promoting respect for the rights set out in the Universal Declaration. Our Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities is a legally binding instrument based on principles established in a United Nations text.

Similarly, the Council of Europe has been a tireless advocate of the International Criminal Court. More than 30 of our member States have ratified the Rome Statute, which is now in force. The Council of Europe pledges to continue working with its member States in helping the implementation of the Statute.

We also applaud the plan to adopt a draft optional protocol to the United Nations Convention against Torture. The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture, which is one of the most important activities of the Council of Europe, looks forward to working with the United Nations subcommittee that we set up as a result of the adoption of the protocol. The Council of Europe, through another of its important activities, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, has also been active in the implementation of the conclusions of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance.

We have a joint mission with the United Nations and the rest of the international community. This mission is to defeat the forces of hatred and fanaticism, which are the antithesis of human rights, and which can lead, as we have seen, to indiscriminate terrorism. The United Nations has taken a leading role in the international response to the events of 11 September. The Council of Europe's main contribution has been to strengthen legal cooperation in the fight against terrorism. At the same time, we stand firm in our opposition to the death penalty in these and all other circumstances.

Nor has the Council of Europe confined its concerns to Europe. We take an active interest in developments in and among our neighbours to the East, in the Middle East and in North Africa, and, through the work of our North-South Centre in Lisbon, in the rest of the world as well.

I am confident that in the coming months and years, the Council of Europe will continue to work alongside the United Nations on the challenges before us. The Council of Europe's work is the work of the

United Nations. Our values are the values of the United Nations. Our goals are the goals of the United Nations. In the Council of Europe, we will continue to look to the United Nations for support and inspiration. And we hope that we can give the same in return.

Mr. Toscano-Amores (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): The creation of the Latin American Economic System on 17 October 1975 took place in an international environment dominated by bipolar confrontation, in the midst of which Latin America and the Caribbean sought to equip themselves with a truly regional organization under the exclusive control and management of the countries of the region.

In order to ensure for themselves active participation and an international presence, Latin America and the Caribbean vitally needed to assert their own identity and personality and to undertake an independent critical analysis. It also needed to set up a permanent system of economic cooperation, interacting with international agencies, third countries or regional groups of countries, and to establish a guiding body in the joint negotiations that might potentially involve Latin America and the Caribbean.

As it came into being, the Latin American Economic System set up to create such a space in the region, because the international economic landscape had proved to be adverse to the needs of our countries. The international economic relations that developed following the Second World War, marked by the imbalances and inequities repeatedly alluded to by developing countries in this and other forums, underwent changes during the 1980s and 1990s. Regrettably, those changes did not mean correcting those imbalances; rather, they consolidated them in a pattern of economic and political blocs in which the decision-making capacity was concentrated in a few countries.

All of this indicates the grave obstacles that the countries of the Latin American region face in overcoming poverty and underdevelopment. The conditionality implicit in stabilization policies and structural adjustment programmes tends to weaken the structures of the States concerned, while economic and trading openness is pursued in an international market riddled with protectionist barriers imposed by the developed countries.

These conditionalities and structural adjustments imposed by the international financial agencies have

begun to have a harmful impact on our socio-political structures. Regional democratic systems have had and continue to face profound and intractable economic crises while social discontent has grown. As these attempts fail, the very democratic governance of the region totters dangerously; such deterioration cannot continue indefinitely, because there is a genuine danger of collapse.

We must therefore ask ourselves what course to take in addressing these challenges. There is no easy answer because, unfortunately, it depends not only on countries' striving to find the path to development, but also on the support offered by the developed countries possessing financial and technological resources.

Against this backdrop, SELA's validity is all the more necessary, as is its interaction with other multilateral forums for debate and concertation, especially the United Nations. As has been said, one of SELA's objectives is to promote a system of consultation and coordination in order to develop common regional positions and strategies vis-à-vis other countries, forums and international agencies, as well as to promote Latin American integration. In this regard, cooperation with the United Nations system is also essential, since it encompasses multilateral agencies with convergent and complementary objectives at the regional and global levels.

One feature of the current world order is the lack of alternative academic and political debate. In this respect, there is a need for an increase in the quality and quantity of the cooperation of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in order to develop better mechanisms of information exchange, reciprocal attendance at meetings and financial contributions to SELA activities. Above all, however, Ecuador should like to see SELA and ECLAC pool their capacities in order to reinvigorate the academic and political debate on the urgent need for a fairer and more equitable new world order, because the social turmoil in our continent reflects a disenchantment with and intolerance of the current world situation and urgently calls for effective alternatives to overcome the structural crises that, since the 1980s, have undermined the capacities and well-being of our peoples.

Similarly, complementary action between SELA and the agencies of the United Nations system will be important in securing firm support for technical and

economic cooperation among developing countries that is complementary with but not a substitute for North-South cooperation. This will optimize the rational use of resources stemming from cooperation and their impact on national development efforts.

The Millennium Summit set 2015 as the deadline for overcoming poverty. Since its endorsement by the General Assembly, very few tangible steps have been taken in that direction. Accordingly, it is a priority for the entire United Nations system to work more closely with regional organizations, including SELA, in order to achieve the targets set at Monterrey and Johannesburg and to realize the aspirations of all people to economic and social well-being, a basic element in the construction of productive societies that are ready to co-exist peacefully in a fair and dignified life now and in the future.

Mr. Kikaya (Kenya): Let me begin by extending to you, Sir, my deep appreciation for the excellent manner in which you have conducted this session.

My delegation wishes to thank the Secretary-General for his report in document A/57/351 on agenda item 22 (m) on cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, in line with General Assembly resolution 56/48 of 7 December 2001. Indeed, the adoption of that particular resolution was in keeping with our collective resolve to enhance the role of the African Union in all activities of the United Nations concerning Africa, a position that Kenya is proud to associate itself with.

We acknowledge the fact that the development of the African continent will ultimately depend on the ownership of development policies and commitment of the African leaders and peoples. The cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations is expected to assume fresh dynamism following the launch of the African Union by African heads of State and Government on 10 July 2002 in Durban, South Africa. This important development launched the revitalization of the organization both in orientation and institutional structure. In addition, the adoption of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as a programme of the African Union bears eloquent testimony to the commitment and determination of our peoples in the pursuit of sustainable development.

We welcome the positive support given by the international community to NEPAD and especially the

adoption by the General Assembly of the declaration on NEPAD of 16 September 2002 and General Assembly resolution 57/7 of 4 November 2002 on the final review and appraisal of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and support for NEPAD.

Development can only be achieved in an atmosphere of peace, stability and security. The escalation of conflicts in Africa has eroded development gains attained over the years. In recent times, it has been established that conflict situations are havens for the illegal exploitation of natural resources. To stem the tide of chaos, Kenya supports the role of the United Nations in the area of peace and security. We fully welcome any form of collaborative mechanism between the United Nations and the African Union in preventive diplomacy, particularly in the operation of peace missions in Africa. My delegation wishes to reiterate that Kenya will continue to participate in various peacekeeping operations whenever called upon.

My delegation welcomes the efforts of the United Nations in promoting peace in the Great Lakes region. We support the deployment of United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and we remain confident that the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo will work closely with the African Union under the framework of Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement in realizing tangible peace.

Kenya has been in the forefront of the search for peace in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa regions, especially in southern Sudan and in Somalia, as it is our conviction that no sustainable development can be achieved in an atmosphere of war and conflict. I therefore call upon the United Nations to lend support to regional and subregional initiatives of conflict early warning and response mechanisms with a view to enhancing our capacity in conflict prevention and management.

Kenya reiterates the important role of regional organizations in conflict resolution, preventive diplomacy and peacemaking. However, cooperation between regional organizations, including the African Union, and the United Nations should be reinforced.

Humanitarian and emergency situations in Africa seem to elicit a slow response from the international community. Kenya continues to shoulder an enormous

burden resulting from the influx of refugees from neighbouring countries; we call for international support in alleviating that burden. The United Nations and the African Union need to collaborate in building Africa's capacity to mitigate both natural and man-made disasters. Kenya would like to draw the attention of the international community, particularly the United Nations system, to the need for Africa to be equipped with a rapid response mechanism to disasters on the continent, especially in terms of disaster preparedness, prevention and management. We hold the view that international solidarity is necessary in the prevention of the root causes of the problem of refugees and displaced persons, and we urge closer coordination and monitoring of global efforts in addressing the entire range of humanitarian crises.

Kenya is deeply concerned with the question of the excessive availability, accumulation and illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons. These weapons threaten human security and hinder socio-economic development and political stability. It is therefore imperative that the global community take decisive steps to alleviate this problem. Kenya reaffirms its commitment to work hand in hand with the United Nations, the African Union and other regional organizations to stem this problem.

Most African countries are still amongst the poorest in the world; out of 34 least developed countries in the world 29 are from Africa. This calls for concerted efforts to correct the imbalance. The implementation of the commitments of the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, the International Conference on Financing for Development, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and other United Nations conferences and summits holds the key to sustainable development.

There is no doubt that the process of globalization and the rapid transformation of the international economic environment have contributed to the marginalization of sub-Saharan Africa. We call upon the United Nations agencies, in collaboration with the African Union, to play a more effective role in reducing the negative impact of globalization. In this regard, regional integration in the promotion of economic growth must be encouraged and supported.

My delegation is optimistic that the collaboration of the African Union and the United Nations in the implementation of the development agenda for Africa

and in meeting the targets of the Millennium Declaration with respect to poverty eradication and the provision of shelter will eventually realize sustainable development in Africa.

Ms. Plà Comella (Andorra) (*spoke in French*): I have the pleasure of speaking on agenda item 22 (h), "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union". Since the General Assembly's adoption of resolution 56/46, and as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General (A/57/375), cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) has steadily strengthened and grown. In that regard, we hail the leading role that the IPU has played in major international United Nations conferences. National parliaments, either through the IPU or because they were represented on national delegations, were able to participate in making decisions about conferences texts on sustainable development and security.

On sustainable economic and social development, the IPU made an active contribution which enriched, for example, the declarations adopted at the special session of the General Assembly on children and at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg. First, the IPU and the United Nations Children's Fund organized a parliamentary forum on children at which 250 of parliamentarians from 75 countries adopted a set of recommendations and measures designed to protect and promote the rights and well-being of children. Then, in accordance with an initiative of the South African Parliament, the IPU brought together 300 parliamentarians from more than 50 countries in order to adopt a parliamentary declaration which was subsequently presented to the Johannesburg Summit.

In the area of peace and security, the IPU has played a pioneering role in combating terrorism. At its 106th Conference, on 11 September 2001, the IPU condemned with the utmost energy the terrorist attacks perpetrated against the United States and subsequently adopted a resolution in which it invited States to cooperate in combating and preventing terrorism. That resolution also invited national parliaments to promote or endorse the United Nations anti-terrorism conventions.

The Principality of Andorra, with a parliamentary tradition going back to 1419, can only welcome the fact that the General Assembly, by resolution 57/32,

invited the IPU to participate in its work as an observer. This will undoubtedly help to bolster cooperation between the two institutions.

(spoke in Spanish)

In conclusion, I wish to thank the Permanent Representative of Chile and his delegation for their work in drafting and conducting the negotiations on draft resolution A/57/L.38. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Andorra told me personally that we would be sponsoring the resolution and that we would speak at this meeting, stressing the importance of strengthening cooperation between Governments and parliaments in the international arena of the United Nations. In Andorra we shall continue to actively support such cooperation.

Mr. Šerkšnys (Lithuania): Lithuania fully associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Denmark on behalf of the European Union and associated countries.

I would like first to thank warmly the delegation of Malta, the country which recently assumed the duties of the chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, for the presentation of draft resolution A/57/L.23, on cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe. At the same time, allow me to express our appreciation to the delegation of Luxembourg, which did a remarkable job preparing the draft resolution.

Since 1989, the Council of Europe has enlarged its membership significantly and has integrated most of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe; it has supported them in their efforts to implement standards of democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

With the accession of Bosnia and Herzegovina earlier this year, the organization now counts 44 member States. In this regard, another important fact is that in September 2002 the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted its opinion no. 239 (2002), on inviting the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to become a full member of the organization.

The Council of Europe remains the main standard setter in the field of the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the European continent. Therefore, continuous and increasing cooperation between this regional organization and the United Nations, in particular the Offices of the United Nations High Commissioners for

Human Rights and for Refugees, UNICEF and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe should be supported by States members of both forums. The Council of Europe has tremendous experience in human rights education and training and legislative expertise, as well as experience in the elaboration of legally binding international instruments in the fields of human rights, criminal law, environment and culture and in the social sphere. It is important that the Council of Europe legal space be open to participation broader than only the membership of the organization.

Lithuania highly values the contribution of the Council of Europe to international action against terrorism, namely, successful elaboration of a draft protocol amending the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, carried by the Multi-disciplinary Group on International Action against Terrorism. At the same time, it is important to stress that the Council of Europe has elaborated and adopted a set of guidelines on human rights and the fight against terrorism.

During the last decade the death penalty has disappeared from many of the European criminal codes. For this, tremendous credit undoubtedly goes to the Council of Europe. Here, I wish to hail the adoption of Protocol No. 13 to the European Convention on Human Rights, which was opened for signature on 3 May 2002 in Vilnius. That document provides for abolition of the death penalty in all circumstances.

Regional cooperation can make an essential contribution to consolidating stability and security, and the Council of Europe plays a significant role in promoting regional cooperation, inter alia cooperation between regional organizations, various initiatives and processes in Europe, and the United Nations. In this regard my delegation considers the Vilnius Declaration on Regional Cooperation, adopted on 3 May 2002, to be a very important document, guiding regional cooperation which could be used in other parts of the world as well.

This year we witnessed the important event of the entry into force of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Also the first session of the Assembly of States Parties took place last September. The role of the Council of Europe in facilitating the entry into force of the Rome Statute and its readiness to provide States with the relevant assistance to become States parties are commendable.

In conclusion, I would like to express my conviction that cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe offers promising opportunities. The contribution of the Council of Europe to United Nations initiatives on the peace-building dialogue could be among prospective cooperation topics. Exchanges of information, views and good practices in fields of interest to both organizations at any level should be encouraged. In that regard, I would like to welcome the exchanges of views on United Nations matters relating to human rights, with the participation of experts from various States, held annually in Strasbourg.

Also in this connection, the importance of high-level tripartite meetings of the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe has to be emphasized. We thus strongly encourage a proactive approach and closer cooperation among all delegations and secretariats in New York, Geneva and Strasbourg.

Mr. Haneda (Japan): The importance of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, particularly in addressing issues of conflict prevention and economic development, cannot be overstated.

This year we witnessed a truly historic event, namely the establishment of the African Union (AU). I would like first of all to comment upon cooperation between that regional organization and the United Nations. The problems Africa is facing pose tremendous challenges not only to the region itself but to the international community as a whole. In order to address these problems, Japan has consistently advocated the importance of Africa's ownership, that is its own initiatives and self-help efforts, as well as Africa's partnership with the international community, which supports such efforts.

Progress in development cannot be sustained for long unless the beneficiaries of development assume responsibility for tackling the challenges. Thus, African development must be initiated and led by the African peoples themselves. But at the same time, in order to help ensure the fruitfulness of those efforts, the international community, as an equal partner, should respect and support those efforts.

The countries of Africa have clearly demonstrated their ownership of the development process through the elaboration of the New Partnership

for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the establishment of the African Union. Japan and indeed the entire international community pay high tribute to them for these efforts and achievements.

I wish to emphasize that, hereafter, all cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, as well as other regional and subregional organizations in Africa, should be conducted in a manner conducive to encouraging and strengthening Africa's ownership. Japan's determination to make every effort in that regard is demonstrated in its plans to convene, in collaboration with the United Nations and other international organizations, the third Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD III) in October 2003.

Like development issues, the prevention and resolution of conflicts in Africa also require self-help efforts at the regional and subregional levels. Japan intends to continue to support the activities of the African Union in that area as well by encouraging the appropriate use of the AU Peace Fund, to which we recently made a contribution of \$200,000.

Next, I would like to comment on the cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO). My delegation would like to commend the President of the organization's forty-first session, the Honourable Senator Kanu G. Agabi, and the Government of Nigeria for successfully hosting the very fruitful annual meeting of the AALCO in Abuja last July in their role as Chair. AALCO is a truly unique regional organization which promotes international legal cooperation; develops and disseminates expertise in international law by organizing annual meetings, seminars and workshops which focus on current issues in international law under consideration in various forums of the United Nations and other bodies; and contributes to the process of codification and development of international law. Japan is confident that the work of the codification of international law will be greatly advanced by strengthening the interaction between AALCO and the United Nations.

In conclusion, I wish to briefly comment on the cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). With the adoption of resolution 57/32, we believe that the IPU, with its unique character as a world organization representing national parliaments, will significantly strengthen the

parliamentary dimension of the work of the United Nations.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): The consideration of agenda item 22, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations", is of great importance at a time when the demands of globalization call for rational integration of the world's activities.

The fact that so many institutions have expressed the desire to establish organizational links with the United Nations provides indisputable proof of the vitality of our Organization, as well as real reassurances for us who are its privileged members. Our hope is that through that cooperation, the efforts of all those organizations will serve to strengthen the United Nations in its leading and central role of promoting peace and justice throughout the world.

Given the equal importance of all the organizations concerned under agenda item 22, and without intending to be arbitrary, we would like to focus our attention on just a few of those organizations. I should first like to refer to the African Union.

To say the least, the challenges confronting Africa are enormous. First of all, there are the political challenges. In dealing with the demands of democratization and with social challenges — challenges that are sometimes tribal in nature — the continent is also being constantly challenged by internal conflicts and crises, most of which are associated with the problems inherent in devolution and a State's exercise of its powers. The resolution of those conflicts, either through preventive means or through peacekeeping operations, requires the assistance of the United Nations. In that regard, it is only right that we commend the role of the United Nations in calming a good number of regional crises in Africa. It is also important that we note the support of the United Nations for the democratization process, in particular in the area of providing electoral assistance to African countries.

With regard to economic challenges, the African Union expects a great deal from the United Nations in helping it to combat poverty, in accordance with the commitments set out in the Millennium Declaration. Cooperation with the United Nations will always be essential, whether with regard to the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development,

stemming the negative effects of globalization or making efforts to achieve sustainable development.

With regard to social and humanitarian concerns, the African Union is aware of the fact that a solution to the negative impact of the major epidemics ravaging Africa — in particular HIV/AIDS and malaria — as well as to many social constraints and problems — such as those associated with refugees, respect for human rights and improving the status of women and children — necessarily require partnership with the United Nations.

To end my comments on the subject of the African Union, I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to congratulate the members of the Permanent Observer Mission of the African Union to the United Nations, who are primarily responsible for the cooperation between the Union and the Organization. I would like in particular to encourage them, for we know that, as they do not enjoy diplomatic status, they work under unenviable conditions.

My delegation stands in solidarity with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of South Africa on behalf of the African Union. My delegation has no doubt that the Assembly will give draft resolution A/57/L.39 its genuine and overwhelming support.

I should now like to turn to the subject of cooperation with the International Organization of la Francophonie (IOF). The IOF has proven its credibility as a cultural and linguistic instrument in the service of international cooperation. Founded under its current acronym just a few years ago, the IOF has since demonstrated remarkable dynamism and vitality given that its sphere is constantly expanding and its activities continue to become diversified.

Above all, the IOF is now an essential participant in the search for peace, the solving of crises and the strengthening of democratic institutions, not to mention its training assistance and its efforts at promoting human rights, among other things. Strengthening relations between the United Nations and the IOF, both of which pursue the same goals and objectives, is therefore a logical step.

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the leaders of the Permanent Observer

Mission of the IOF to the United Nations, who are the force behind this dynamic policy of cooperation.

Given the merits of the IOF, we are certain that draft resolution A/57/L.29 will be adopted by consensus. I would also like to conclude my comments in this regard by recalling that the next IOF summit of heads of State or Government will be held in Burkina Faso in 2004.

I would now like to say a few words about the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). The Assembly will recall that, for the last two years, my country has been among those vigorously calling for the IPU to be granted observer status at the United Nations. That has now become a reality. We are convinced that the very important step we have just taken will serve to further strengthen cooperation between the two organizations.

As we all know, the Inter-Parliamentary Union is the worldwide organization of parliaments of sovereign States. Its statute very clearly indicates that it shares the objectives of the United Nations. In fact, through its activities, the IPU is working towards peace and cooperation among peoples and the strengthening of representative democracy. To those ends, the Inter-Parliamentary Union promotes contacts, coordination and exchanges of experience between parliaments and parliamentarians of all countries. It also considers issues of national interest and expresses its views on those issues in order to stimulate subsequent actions by national parliaments. In that way it is contributing to intensifying international efforts in favour of peace. The United Nations is indeed aware of the advocacy role played by the IPU in the search for international security.

Strengthened by its new status, the IPU will be able to take advantage of its special rapport with the United Nations to further shape and strengthen its cooperation with the Organization. The basis for that cooperation has been established by virtue of the cooperation agreement signed with the United Nations in 1996, in which the IPU noted the responsibilities of the United Nations under the Charter and committed itself to continue to support the Organization's activities. The foundation for IPU-United Nations cooperation was also established through the strengthening of cooperation between the Organization and national parliaments called for by heads of State and Government in the Millennium Declaration, as well as through the Secretary-General's report to the

General Assembly of 26 June 2001, which endorsed the IPU's proposals on the role it could play to strengthen cooperation with the Organization.

It is for all those pertinent reasons that Burkina Faso fully supports draft resolution A/57/L.38. We are a sponsor of that draft resolution, and have no doubt that the Assembly will adopt it by consensus.

I cannot conclude my statement without congratulating the leaders of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and its representatives in New York in particular, for the results they have obtained.

Mr. Scott (Australia): I am pleased to be able to speak briefly to this agenda item on behalf of the Australian delegation. The range of sub-items grouped under agenda item 22 provides clear evidence of the very extensive network of cooperation and dialogue between the United Nations and regional and other entities. Australia is gratified by the constructive approach evident in these reports and in interventions that others have made before me. We are also encouraged to see this item serve as a practical example of the efforts of streamlining the work of this Assembly without compromising on the content of the matters under discussion. We think it entirely appropriate that the issues under this item will be addressed in future on a biennial basis.

Australia has been pleased to be a sponsor of a number of the draft resolutions presented under this agenda item, including that of cooperation with the Pacific Islands Forum, on which the Ambassador of Fiji has spoken so eloquently on our behalf. As one of two full-time Australian parliamentary delegates to this General Assembly, I would like to make a few remarks about another draft resolution, namely on cooperation with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), introduced under agenda item 22 (h).

Notwithstanding Australia's long history of engagement with, and support for, the IPU, Australian parliamentary delegates to the General Assembly in the past have expressed caution about the need for the IPU to be represented formally at the United Nations. This stems from our belief that the parliaments of IPU member countries are in fact able to give voice to their views through their elected Governments and their representatives here in New York. That said, we note that arguments made in favour of the draft resolution have drawn attention to the particular nature of the IPU, noting its unique status as an inter-State body, and

have stressed that granting it the right to circulate official documents at no expense to the United Nations does not set a precedent for others. We believe these two points are very important. At a time when the Secretary-General is trying to rationalize the agenda and the workload of the United Nations, we are not sure that adding to the list of potential documents which must be processed and digested, in particular by smaller delegations, is necessarily going to help the streamlining and reform of United Nations administrative processes that we and many others strongly support.

Nonetheless, we are encouraged by advice that the volume of documents in question is unlikely to be great, and by the very strong support expressed by numerous sponsors of this draft resolution. We interpret this as a collective desire to make this new arrangement operate efficiently to further the cooperation between the two organizations. It is on this basis that Australia has joined the list of sponsors of this draft resolution.

Mr. Huston (Liechtenstein): When we met a year ago to discuss cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe, the common fight against terrorism was the main topic on our agenda. Today, international action against terrorism is still a top political priority of the United Nations, the Council of Europe, and also of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and therefore an important area where coordination and complementary efforts are essential.

We commend the important contribution made by the Council of Europe through its adoption of "Guidelines on Human Rights and the Fight against Terrorism". These Guidelines are designed to help States find the right balance between the requirements of effectively protecting society and preserving human rights and fundamental freedoms, an undertaking that is also at the core of the activities of the United Nations. We are glad to point out that just this morning the Third Committee of the General Assembly adopted without a vote and recommended to the plenary a draft resolution on the "Protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism" (A/C.3/57/L.61), thus complementing the existing efforts of the United Nations system.

Further priority areas of Council of Europe action in the fight against terrorism complement and advance

the efforts of the United Nations. Preventing the financing of terrorism is one important example. The Council of Europe Select Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures has been mandated to give high priority to the assessment of the implementation by member States of the Special Recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force on the financing of terrorism. The work of this committee includes on-site visits and typologies meetings, where financial and legal experts discuss prevalent money laundering methods, emerging threats and the development of effective counter-measures. At the last typologies meeting, which was held in Liechtenstein at the invitation of the Liechtenstein Government, counter-measures against the financing of terrorism were the main topic. The acting head of the United Nations Global Programme against Money-Laundering (GPML) participated as a keynote speaker. His contribution indicated the great potential for complementary action of both organizations in this area.

The OSCE, as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, has been closely working together with the United Nations and its specialized organizations, in particular with regard to the global fight against terrorism. At the upcoming Ministerial Council meeting in Porto, Portugal, the Ministers will adopt a charter on preventing and combating terrorism that recognizes the importance of the work developed by the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee and that reaffirms the obligation and willingness of participating States and the OSCE to cooperate with this Committee. The Charter recognizes that the relevant United Nations conventions, protocols, and Security Council resolutions, in particular Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), constitute the primary international legal framework for the fight against terrorism, and it reaffirms the commitment of all OSCE States to become parties as soon as possible to all 12 United Nations Conventions and protocols relating to terrorism. In turn, the Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Chairman have emphasized the importance of the role of regional organizations, such as the Council of Europe and the OSCE, and the relevant legal instruments under their auspices.

As stated in the report prepared by the Secretary-General (A/57/225), the Council of Europe and the Center for International Crime Prevention continue to

share common interests in combating transnational organized crime, trafficking, corruption, and terrorism in Europe. In addition to the promising steps already taken, we welcome the suggestion made by the Secretary-General to further strengthen cooperation through information-sharing and better coordination in the delivery of assistance. The establishment of a mechanism for information-sharing on request for technical assistance is an idea that should be further developed. Such a mechanism would reduce the risk of duplication and help ensure the efficient and focused use of the resources of both organizations.

In the area of trafficking, the OSCE closely cooperates with the Center for International Crime Prevention. The Ministerial Council meeting in Porto will produce a roadmap for future coordination of these activities.

The report by the Secretary-General provides a wealth of indications on the continued close cooperation between the organizations on the working and political levels. Since a unique feature of the Council of Europe is its parliamentary dimension, we would like to express our satisfaction that during this reporting period there have been also exchanges between members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and high-level representatives of the United Nations. We believe that such contact is especially useful with regard to the assessment of the political and legal situation in certain countries.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe plays an important role in this respect, due to its mandate to monitor compliance of member States with the commitments they entered into when joining the organization. These commitments relate to the protection of human rights, the rule of law, democracy, and protection of the rights of minorities. This mechanism of the Council of Europe considerably helps to advance the ideals and values that are also defended by the United Nations.

It was also the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe which strongly advocated the elaboration of an international instrument to prohibit the abuse of the Internet for racist propaganda. The quintessential role of the Parliamentary Assembly, as a driving force for new initiatives, has thus again produced a tangible result. At its last session, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted an Additional Protocol to the Convention on

Cybercrime concerning the Criminalization of Acts of a Racist or Xenophobic Nature Committed Through Computer Systems. This Protocol, the first of its kind, constitutes an important element of the follow-up to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, and gives a further example of the concrete contribution of the Council of Europe to international efforts under the leadership of the United Nations.

Mrs. Ninčić (Yugoslavia): It is with pleasure that I take this opportunity to speak of the cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and between the United Nations and the Council of Europe.

Basic values shared by the United Nations, the OSCE and the Council of Europe include stability, democracy and the rule of law and the promotion and strengthening of human rights and fundamental freedoms. All three multilateral organizations have for years been involved in South-East Europe, both in standard setting and the implementation of those common values. We would like to focus on the role of these organizations from the perspective of the experience of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

My Government would like to emphasize the fruitful cooperation between the OSCE and its Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, confirmed by a number of successfully completed projects and activities. As a result of this cooperation, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has been actively participating in the work of all OSCE bodies and organs and maintains cooperation with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the High Commissioner on National Minorities and the OSCE Representative on Freedom of Media.

My country is currently chairing the OSCE Forum for Security Cooperation and has been actively engaged in the preparation of documents for the forthcoming OSCE Ministerial Council meeting, such as the OSCE Charter on the Prevention and Suppression of Terrorism.

The OSCE Mission in Yugoslavia was established nearly two years ago. The Mission's mandate is to extend assistance and expertise to the Yugoslav authorities at all levels, as well as to interested individuals and organizations in the fields of democracy, protection of human rights, including rights of minorities, the rule of law and economic transition.

The scope of the Mission's activities encompasses the reform of the judiciary, public administration, the police and the media. In all these fields, the role of the OSCE in helping our country overcome a difficult legacy has been remarkable.

The prevailing, publicly stated opinion in OSCE circles is that the OSCE Mission in Yugoslavia represents a new model of a mission for the twenty-first century. It was established by the invitation of the host country, confirming Yugoslavia's willingness to work with and accept assistance from the international community in efficiently implementing reforms.

Cooperation being a two way process, we have found particularly valuable the relationship between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Mission, based on dialogue and the full exchange of information. The Mission actively consults with the competent ministries, local experts and non-governmental organizations, to the benefit of all concerned.

Confidence-building measures in South Serbia, implemented in close cooperation with the Coordinating Center of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Government of the Republic of Serbia, are a distinctive segment of the Mission's activities, ranging from police training to engagement in local elections. Exemplary cooperation has been achieved between the United Nations and the OSCE in this part of our country. The results are a model of support in stabilizing a fragile situation.

We would like to use this opportunity to express once again our appreciation for the flexibility and expertise of the OSCE in the complex tasks it has undertaken in our country and South-East Europe as a whole. We look forward to our continued overall cooperation.

Much has been said in previous debates on the need for better coordination between various international organizations and their missions.

The United Nations and the OSCE have accomplished admirable cooperation in Kosovo and Metohija, where the OSCE constitutes an essential part of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo.

However, as on many previous occasions, we would like to emphasize the necessity of cooperation between the two OSCE Missions in our country — the OSCE Mission in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

and the OSCE Mission in Kosovo and Metohija. This would doubtlessly make possible better results in protecting minorities, returning refugees and internally displaced persons, resolving the issue of missing persons, as well as fighting terrorism and organized crime. For the same reasons, strong cooperation is also needed among OSCE missions deployed throughout South-East Europe.

Turning briefly to the Council of Europe, my Government wishes to express its appreciation of this organization's valuable contribution to the promotion of United Nations principles within South-East Europe. This is done not only for these countries' sake, but for the security of the region and thereby Europe as a whole.

In this context, we appreciate the role of the Council of Europe Mission in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We also welcome the engagement of the Council of Europe in developing a proposal for decentralization in Kosovo and Metohija.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe recently recommended the accession of Yugoslavia to this organization. Our country has agreed to a series of commitments, declaring its readiness to continue its democratic reforms within the Council of Europe. Having neared the end of this process, we fully expect to become a member well before the next debate on this agenda item in the General Assembly.

In conclusion, allow me to say that we welcome the overall efforts of the United Nations, the OSCE and the Council of Europe in assisting the Western Balkans to become just another region of a united Europe.

Mr. Khalid (Pakistan): This statement on behalf of the Pakistani delegation concerns cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). Pakistan has the privilege of being a founding member of both these organizations.

The Organization of Islamic Conference is one of the largest intergovernmental organizations; its 56 members and four observer States come from Asia, Africa and Europe. As the collective voice of the Muslim world, the OIC has been engaged over the years in a constructive and cooperative relationship with the United Nations, reinforcing common efforts in pursuit of peace and development.

The OIC has endeavoured to promote better understanding and dialogue between and among different civilizations and cultures.

It has taken significant measures in fostering peace, in promoting social and economic development, in combating ethnic or racial intolerance and in seeking an end to the causes of injustice and instability, which are a constant threat to world peace and security.

In the aftermath of the tragic events of 11 September, the Islamic world, under the auspices of the OIC, joined the international community in our common endeavour and fight against international terrorism. The OIC has been unequivocal in its condemnation of terrorism. It has adopted its own convention to deal with this scourge and that convention represents a comprehensive framework with a clear definition of terrorism, while upholding the United Nations Charter's cardinal principle of self-determination and acknowledging the legitimacy of freedom struggles against foreign occupation and alien domination. The OIC Convention on Combating International Terrorism offers a useful model.

We welcome the report of the Secretary-General on Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which recapitulates the progress achieved during the past year by the United Nations system and the OIC in promoting their shared goals of international peace and security and development. We also welcome the effective contacts and consultations that the two organizations have maintained over the past several years.

The two organizations have regularly interacted on a number of political issues, including Kashmir, Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, the Middle East and Palestine. Their mutually supportive role and their determination to promote negotiations to resolve these conflicts continue to receive wide international support.

Cooperation between the two organizations has also been increasing in a wide range of socio-economic areas of mutual interest. It is gratifying to note that a general meeting of representatives of the Secretariat of the United Nations system and the OIC was held earlier this year in Vienna. Another meeting of focal points of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system and the OIC and its subsidiary organs and specialized and affiliated units was held concurrently.

This formal interaction will further enhance cooperation between the two organizations. We are of the view that the two sides should continue to examine ways and means of further expanding and diversifying their cooperation by identifying new areas.

Pakistan has the great privilege of chairing one of the two main committees of the OIC, namely the Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation, which is known as COMSTECH. The Pakistan-based Committee is responsible for promoting cooperation in the fields of science and technology among Muslim countries. Pakistan is also host to the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) is another major regional organization seeking to promote socio-economic development of its member States on the basis of their common needs and in keeping with the challenges on the global economic scene. The organization was founded by Pakistan, Iran and Turkey as the successor organization to the Regional Cooperation for Development. In 1992, it was expanded to include Afghanistan and the newly established Central Asian States of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, as well as Azerbaijan.

ECO has played an important role in strengthening and promoting multidimensional regional economic cooperation among its member countries. It has identified four priority areas for intense regional cooperation — namely, trade, transport, communications and energy. The project-oriented Almaty Outline Plan underscores the importance that ECO member States attach to the development of transport and communications infrastructure linking the ECO member States with each other and with the outside world.

The conclusion of two important agreements — namely, the ECO Transit Trade Agreement and the ECO Transit Transport Framework Agreement — has given further impetus to the expansion of regional trade and economic cooperation.

The ECO region covers a territory of more than seven million square kilometres and includes a population of nearly 350 million people. The region has immense natural resources, and its members have the political will to tap these resources for the mutual advantage of all. With peace having returned to Afghanistan, ECO can serve not only as a vehicle for

the post-war reconstruction of Afghanistan, but also for developing and integrating the economies of the region, which have borne the brunt of the conflict in Afghanistan.

ECO already has in place the blueprints for the region-wide development of transport and communications infrastructure, facilities for trade and investment, banking and insurance, culture and education and effective use of the region's vast energy resources. We expect the United Nations system and the international community to support the efforts of the ECO and its member States in order to realize these blueprints, not only for the benefit of the region, but also for the world at large.

To conclude, I would like to express our hope and confidence that the cooperation of the United Nations with both the OIC and the ECO will continue to flourish to the mutual benefit of the organizations concerned. Pakistan, as a proud member of the United Nations, the OIC and the ECO, would remain actively involved in the work of all three.

Mr. Kulyk (Ukraine): It is my pleasure to participate in this joint debate on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other international organizations.

From the point of view of the substance of today's topic, we firmly believe that close cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations is a decisive factor in meeting the challenges faced by the world community. Therefore, the importance of the right relationship between them, as well as an adequate level of understanding and mutual support, cannot be overestimated.

Ukraine notes with satisfaction the increasing cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Among the major achievements, I would like first of all to mention the coordinated actions in the fight against international terrorism. We believe that the OSCE Charter on Preventing and Combating Terrorism to be adopted at the forthcoming OSCE Ministerial meeting in Porto will become another significant contribution made by the OSCE to United Nations-led international efforts in this sphere.

We also believe that the United Nations-OSCE dialogue should be further strengthened through joint endeavours to elaborate a comprehensive strategy for

conflict prevention on the basis of the wide use of preventive diplomacy and peace-building efforts.

My country supports all the constructive steps taken to foster coordination and synergy between the United Nations and the OSCE, aimed at bringing peace and stability to the areas in the OSCE region challenged by security threats.

In this regard, let me also welcome the positive developments in cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe. In particular, we are pleased with their steady involvement in the process of post-conflict rehabilitation and strengthening of the rule of law in South-Eastern Europe. For its part, Ukraine remains ready to further contribute to this vital process.

My country attaches special importance to the activities of one of the oldest organizations, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). Having reviewed cooperation between the IPU and the United Nations in the past 12 months, we highly appreciate the achievements made to date. We hope that the invitation to participate in the capacity of observer, recently extended by the General Assembly to the IPU, will strengthen cooperation with this important inter-parliamentary organization.

This year witnessed the historic birth of a new regional organization, the African Union (AU), which assumed the rights and responsibilities of the Organization of African Unity. I would like to reiterate Ukraine's support for the African Union's objectives of securing sustainable peace, stability and development in the continent.

We attach great importance to the strengthening of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional African organizations in the areas of peace and security and political, economic and social development. Ukraine highly commends the continued efforts of the Secretary-General and the United Nations system in promoting such cooperation.

As the African Union is moving forward with the development of its institutional structures, it is important that effective coordination be established between the United Nations system and new mechanisms of the African Union. Particular attention in this regard should be also given to the effective implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

Let me conclude by commending the important role of the International Organization of la Francophonie in promoting and expanding multilateral cooperation in the areas of peace, democracy and human rights, as well as in the social and economic spheres.

The outcome of the Ninth Summit of la Francophonie in Beirut in October this year clearly underlined the importance of promoting the dialogue of cultures and civilizations and bringing peoples closer together through mutual understanding in the interests of consolidating peace, democracy and respect for human rights. I would also like to reiterate the willingness of Ukraine, whose people fully share the values, goals and priorities of la Francophonie, to join the activities of this organization as an observer.

Mr. Pfanzelter (Austria): Austria welcomes this second joint debate on cooperation between the United Nations and several regional and other organizations under a single agenda item. Austria would like to refer to the statement by the Presidency of the European Union and add a few brief observations due to the interest and special responsibilities that Austria has in regard to certain organizations.

Austria has been actively engaged in the work of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) since the beginning of the process of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe. We are honoured and proud to host this organization, which has proved itself an important actor in the field of conflict prevention, civil crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. My delegation would like to thank the Portuguese chairmanship for its untiring engagement this year on behalf of the Organization.

The OSCE and the United Nations are close partners in the efforts for peace, democracy and prosperity. We must continue to strengthen this relationship. Today's threats to security and stability are of such a complex and diverse nature that no single institution or country on its own is able to combat them effectively. One example of the excellent cooperation between the OSCE and the United Nations is the effort in countering terrorism. After 11 September 2001, the OSCE adopted two far-reaching documents to prevent and combat terrorism: the Bucharest Plan of Action and the Bishkek Programme of Action. Both require close interaction between the organs of the OSCE and those

of the United Nations, in particular the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention in Vienna.

As host of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), Austria assumes a special responsibility for the successful preparation of the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Since the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the CTBTO Preparatory Committee took up its work at the Vienna International Centre in 1997, under its Executive Secretary Wolfgang Hoffmann, much progress has been achieved. The impressive number of signatures and ratifications demonstrates the growing support for this Treaty: 166 States have signed, and 97 States have deposited their instrument of ratification.

Unfortunately, the number of States whose ratification is required for the CTBT's entry into force is stagnating at 31. We must intensify our efforts to convince the necessary countries to ratify the Treaty. In this respect, my delegation underlines the importance of the third conference on facilitating the entry into force of the CTBT, to be convened in 2003. This will be the opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to the CTBT and underline its importance in the context of nuclear non-proliferation.

Austria appreciates the high quality of the cooperation of the United Nations with the Council of Europe. This is particularly true for the work of both organizations on the ground, inter alia: cooperation with the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo in areas such as judicial and legal training, elections and the preparation of legislation; cooperation with United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina regarding post-accession requirements and the legislative work with the Council's Venice Commission; and the joint efforts in Georgia with the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia, inter alia, to normalize the situation in the Gali sector and thus facilitate the return of internally displaced persons.

Austria supports the ongoing work involving both the Council of Europe and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, both of which cover areas which are dealt with at the regional level by the Council of Europe. We are also pleased to note that the Council of Europe played a constructive role this year, both before and during the

General Assembly's special session on Children and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg. I am confident that the Member States of the United Nations and States members of the Council of Europe will continue to support Secretary-General Kofi Annan and Secretary General Walter Schwimmer in their efforts to intensify the dialogue between the two organizations.

Before closing, I would also like to congratulate the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) for having formally received observer status in the General Assembly earlier this week. As a sponsor of both the resolution in the Sixth Committee on the observer status and the resolution under our current agenda item, Austria supports the special cooperation between the IPU and the United Nations. By including the IPU in its debates, the General Assembly will acknowledge the voices of the elected representatives of our peoples and will benefit not only from their valuable contributions on the issues but from additional democratic legitimacy.

As a host country to the United Nations and to various other international and regional organizations, Austria has stressed the urgent need for closer inter-organizational dialogue at the policy-making stage. Consequently, Austria initiated, together with the International Peace Academy (IPA), a process to analyse, inter alia, cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations at annual seminars in Vienna. In July 2000, IPA and Austria celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Vienna Seminar with a commemorative session entitled "Sharing political space in peacekeeping: The United Nations and regional organizations, the case of Europe". The last two seminars focused on practical lessons learned in the Caucasus and in Central Asia and on the improvement of institutional cooperation in the future. At the 2003 Vienna seminar we plan to take a closer look at the prospects for cooperation between the United Nations and European organizations in peace operations. We hope that these annual seminars will continue to make a useful contribution to improving inter-organizational cooperation to the benefit of the organizations and their member States.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.